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Final Report: 1988 Iowa Department of  
Transportation Organizational Survey

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 1988, 1341 employees of the Iowa State Department of Transportation (DOT) were surveyed via a mailed questionnaire. The sample was selected such that conclusions about all DOT employees, male employees, female employees, majority employees, minority employees, employees under age 40, and employees 40 years of age or older could be made. These sampling characteristics were chosen in order to facilitate comparisons between current DOT employee attitudes and employee attitudes evaluated in 1984. In addition, the sample size and response rates were sufficiently high that conclusions could be made about each of the six districts, the Ames Highway Division, and the Ames complex, excluding the Highway Division. Altogether fifty-five percent (or 739) questionnaires were returned. Thirty additional employees voluntarily completed the survey, resulting in a final sample size of 769.

The survey covered topics related to job satisfaction, work environment or climate, skill utilization, sexual harassment, communication and information adequacy, and morale. The first four topics were evaluated in 1984 while the last two were unique to this survey.

DOT employees reported levels and patterns of job satisfaction similar to those reported in 1984. They were reasonably well satisfied with supervision and coworkers and moderately satisfied with the work itself. Ames complex employees, excluding the Highway Division, were appreciably more satisfied with the work itself than employees working in other locations. Satisfaction with promotions and promotional opportunities continues to be low, particularly among older employees. In the 1988 survey, there were no differences in job satisfaction between majority and minority group members or between males and females.

Perceptions of the work environment were evaluated along a number of dimensions. There was a high level of support for the idea that the DOT maintains high work standards, a favorable rating about the work environment. On the other hand, there were some negative perceptions about rewards. Employees did not feel that good work is rewarded or recognized to the extent that it should be. Other dimensions of the environment (i.e., warmth, support, identity, and stress) were characterized by moderate levels of endorsement. These ratings of the environment were comparable to those received in 1984. The only noticeable difference is a slight decline in perceptions of warmth (i.e., the idea that the DOT is a warm, friendly place to work).

Responses related to skill utilization indicated that a little more than half of the sample (58%) believe that their skills are well utilized, and as in 1984, minority employees are even less likely to feel their skills are well utilized. District 2 also reported a much lower opinion of skill

utilization. When asked to describe an ideal job, over 46% of the respondents expressed a preference for a more responsible job at the DOT. The theme which emerges from these findings is that employees desire more challenging jobs; a message also communicated in 1984. Finally, with respect to the treatment of job openings at the DOT, preselection by the hiring authority continues to be seen as an unfair source of bias. Perceptions of age discrimination in the handling of these decisions has decreased since 1984 while perceptions of sex and reverse discrimination have increased.

Since 1984 the DOT has undertaken a number of actions designed to make employees aware of what constitutes sexual harassment. This programming appears to have been effective. Over 96% or 739 of 769 employees reported that they know and understand what sexual harassment is. Sexual harassment does not appear to be widespread at the DOT but there does continue to be some reluctance to report it to management.

Communication and information adequacy segments of the survey dealt with the overall quality and quantity of information shared at the DOT along with specific forms of job related communication (e.g., Inside TV Report, newsletters). The quality of communication, particularly that between employees and their immediate supervisors, was rated above average. The quantity of information ratings were somewhat lower, suggesting an area for improvement. Four forms of communication received low ratings of usefulness: Inside TV Report, Inside Magazine, grapevine/rumors, and performance evaluations.

Overall morale ratings were judged to be adequate and there were no noticeable differences in opinion based on race, sex, age, or district affiliation. Perceptions which adversely impacted morale were those associated with the idea that people cannot advance in the DOT unless someone leaves and the notion that relocation is necessary for advancement.

### Recommendations

A survey such as this nearly always identifies some strengths and some weaknesses in an organization. This report illustrates that the DOT is no exception. Below are some recommendations concerning what issues DOT leaders should consider based on these survey results. However, it is recognized that not all of these recommendations may be realistic in view of the fact that the DOT, like other organizations, must operate under constraints and conditions it cannot control. Moreover, priorities must be established among a number of worthy causes.

1. A recurring problem at the DOT is the lack of perceived upward mobility. Employees continue to report their dissatisfaction with promotional opportunities at the DOT. The findings associated with skill utilization, overqualification, and morale further support this observation. It is not

that employees find their present jobs boring or meaningless, rather, they feel that their experience qualifies them for a higher level position carrying more responsibility, authority, status and pay. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the DOT is becoming a demographically older organization. Both average length of service and average length of time at the same pay grade have increased since 1984. Recommendations for this problem are difficult and costly, assuming the lack of opportunities for promotion is objectively true and no organization growth is anticipated. Early retirement incentives constitute one possibility. It would also be useful to review the classification system in order to see if more "steps" might be appropriate for any job hierarchy. However, these should not be added if they are only cosmetic in nature. Lastly, it would be advantageous to publicize promotions more widely in order to increase employees' awareness of promotional activity.

2. The low response rate from male minority employees and the Des Moines district is bothersome. While there may be no systematic explanation for why these groups failed to return their questionnaires, it may reflect an underlying sense of distrust. Participation of these groups (e.g., social activities, grievances) should be monitored to ensure there is no systematic problem.

3. Overall there were few differences in the findings associated with district affiliation. Satisfaction with the work itself was one of the few areas to show any differences. It is recommended that District 5's low satisfaction with the work itself be investigated. In view of the highest ratings of this factor in the Ames complex (excluding the Highway Division), it might be possible to offer promotions, rotations or sabbaticals to the Ames complex as a reward for superior job performance. It may be that work performed in Ames is viewed as more valuable because of its potential to impact the agency state wide. Clearly this recommendation is limited by many factors but it might also serve to elevate the low perceptions of rewards.

4. The problem with low perceptions of rewards was noted in 1984 as well as in the present survey findings. It is suggested that the DOT rededicate itself to finding ways to recognize good performance. Pay and other extrinsic rewards are of course important but social rewards should not be overlooked. Such activity might also serve to reverse the decline in perceptions of warmth observed in the present findings.

5. Communication practices at the DOT would benefit from review. The areas of concern center on the quantity of information from the district office and the Human Resources Bureau and the utility of Inside TV Report, Inside Magazine, and performance appraisals. The lack of perceived utility of the latter is especially troublesome.

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Introduction

In June 1988, 1341 employees of the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) were asked to complete a mailed questionnaire asking for their opinions on issues involving the work climate and communication at the DOT. The survey was not only intended to monitor current attitudes and perceptions but represented a follow-up to an organizational survey conducted at the DOT four years ago, in July 1984. Both surveys were designed by Paula C. Morrow, with the assistance of Mary Christy (DOT Bureau of Human Resources) and the Morale committee. In addition, both data collection efforts relied on questionnaires sent directly to employees' homes, with instructions to return completed questionnaires to the consultant at her office address. All responses were therefore anonymous. The analysis of the survey data was completed by the consultant and thus this evaluation represents an independent assessment of the work climate and other related communication practices at the DOT.

This report is divided into three major sections. The first section describes the nature of the sample more fully, including representation by district office. The second section deals primarily with work climate at the DOT and contains comparative information concerning how things have changed or not changed since 1984. The major topics covered include job satisfaction, specific work climate characteristics, skill utilization and sexual harassment. The third section is devoted to topics not covered in the original survey. The major focus of this section is on communication and information adequacy. In addition, there are a number of items related to morale.

Finally, in the 1984 study, a great deal of attention was given to how the classification of majority/minority, female/male, and younger/older (40 years of age or more) affected perceptions and attitudes. Data will again be reported using these divisions with the addition of a new classification, district affiliation.

#### Description of the Sample

Employees participating in the study were randomly selected in such a way as to permit conclusions about (1) all DOT employees, (2) female employees and male employees, (3) majority employees and minority employees, (4) older and younger employees and (5) employees affiliated with each of the six districts, Ames, (H.D. - Highway Division and Exc. H.D. - Excluding Highway Division) and Des Moines. To allow such a large number of generalizations, a relatively large sample was needed. The DOT leadership approved a sample of up to 1500 employees and it was decided to sample around 1200 majority employees and all of the minority employees. It was also agreed that any employee not selected to be in the study would be permitted to complete a questionnaire. The following sampling strategy was used:

An official census on May 19, 1988 identified 3902 persons working at the DOT. Of these employees, 139 were classified as minority group members (i.e., Native American Indian, Black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, or Other) and were selected for inclusion in the study. The remaining 3763 employees were grouped by district affiliation, and within district, by sex. Non-minority were then randomly selected from each district in proportion to the contribution of that district to the DOT employee population (e.g., district 1 contained 398 employees or 10.6% of the total population. Therefore 10.6% or 127 of the targeted 1202 majority sample size were

chosen). Since females were not well represented in districts one through six and the Ames Highway Division, selecting equal numbers of males and females from these districts was not possible. Instead, all of the women in these districts were selected while equal numbers were taken from Ames (Exc. H.D.) and Des Moines (see Table A, Appendix A). The inability to secure enough female employees from some districts means that comparisons between men and women within a given district are inappropriate. However, there were substantial enough numbers of women to make overall inferences about men and women at the organization wide level. In summary, 1341 Iowa DOT employees were selected to be in the study and were mailed questionnaires on June 8, 1988.

By June 30, 1988, 769 usable questionnaires had been returned. Excluding 30 employees who were not part of the random sample and who voluntarily completed questionnaires, this represents a response rate of 55%. Since most mailed questionnaires achieve a response rate around 40%, the return rate associated with this study is above average. A breakdown of the target and actual sample characteristics by race, sex and district is provided in Table 1.

The sample consisted of 440 (59.6%) majority males, 237 (32.1%) majority females, 39 (5.3%) minority males, 13 (1.8%) minority females, and 10 (1.4%) of unknown race/sex combinations. Each group of employees is thus adequately represented although the minority groups did not demonstrate as high a response rate as majority groups (i.e., 54.7%, majority males; 59.5%, majority females; versus 34.8%, minority males; and 48.1% minority females). The minority males demonstrated a notably lower response rate, contributing



Table 1: Target and Actual Sample Characteristics

<u>Race/Sex Characteristics</u>	<u>Number in Target Sample</u>	<u>Number Returning Questionnaires</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>
Majority males	804	440 (59.6%)	54.7%
Majority females	398	237 (32.1%)	59.5%
Minority males	112	39 (5.3%)	34.8%
Minority females	27	13 (1.8%)	48.1%
Unknown	---	10 (1.4%)	---
Total targeted	1341	739 (100.0%)	55.1%
<u>District Affiliation</u>			
District 1	127	74 (10.0%)	58.3%
District 2	109	81 (11.0%)	74.3%
District 3	101	66 (8.9%)	65.3%
District 4	112	78 (10.6%)	69.6%
District 5	100	60 (8.1%)	60.0%
District 6	143	84 (11.4%)	58.7%
Ames (Exc. H.D.)	184	83 (11.2%)	45.1%
Ames (H.D.)	158	82 (11.1%)	51.9%
Des Moines	168	48 (6.5%)	28.6%
Minorities	139	52 (7.0%)	37.4%
Unknown	---	31 (4.2%)	---
Total targeted	1341	739 (100.0%)	55.1%

Note: Percentages may not add exactly to 100% because of rounding.

to a relatively low response rate of only 37.4% for male and female minority members taken together. This compares with a response rate of 44.9% (40 of 89 possible participants) in 1984. Because of this, and the comparatively small absolute number of minority employees participating in the present study (N=52 or 7% of the sample), all subsequent analyses of minority responses will combine male and female minority data. Moreover, confidence in the generalizability of minority opinions expressed by the study par-

ticipants to all minorities at the DOT is somewhat diminished. Still, it should be noted that the number of minority employees at the DOT has risen from 89 to 139 since 1984 and that the responses of 52 individuals are likely to be more statistically stable than those of 40. Finally, while age was not an explicit sampling dimension, the distribution of employees' ages (including the 30 employees who volunteered) permits comparisons between those less than 40 years of age ( $N=327$  or 42.7%) and those 40 or older ( $N=439$  or 56.9%). Three employees (.4%) failed to report their age.

As previously indicated, efforts were undertaken to insure that each of the nine districts was represented in the final sample. Ideally the response rates from each district will match the overall response rate (see the last column in Table 1). The extent to which the response rate varies appreciably from 55.1% indicates the over- or under-representation of a district. Using an arbitrary guideline of around 10%, it appears that districts 2 and 4 are over-represented (74.3% and 69.6%, respectively) and that Des Moines is under-represented (28.6%). Over-representation is not particularly problematic in a sample this large. It even serves to enhance our confidence in the generalizability of findings to everyone working in districts 2 and 4. However, the Des Moines district response rate is unacceptably low and precludes conclusions about this district. In the analysis to follow, data for this district will be presented for the sake of completeness. Readers are cautioned however not to rely on this information for interdistrict comparisons or decision-making purposes involving the Des Moines district.

Other sample characteristics. In addition to the race, sex, age and district characteristics of the sample, there are other noteworthy characteristics. The study participants revealed a wide range in the number of

years they have worked for the DOT. Approximately 6% have worked for the agency for one year or less while nearly 9% have thirty or more years with the DOT. The average length of service was 13.68 years (see Table 2). In 1984, the average was 11.46 years. This suggests that the DOT is, demographically speaking, becoming an older organization. The average length of service for minorities and females was significantly lower than their majority and male counterparts, a pattern which was also evident in 1984. Naturally, older respondents also demonstrated more years of service. Finally, 5.8% or 44 DOT employees classify themselves as disabled in some way.

The number of years spent at the same pay grade, which can be viewed as an indicator of prospects for upward mobility, was also diverse with an average of 5.43 years. This compares with 4.92 years in 1984. While on the surface this increase may seem undesirable, it must be remembered that the average length of service at the DOT also increased during this time. As more senior employees reach the top end of their salary range, there may be no further pay grades to work toward. Still, remaining at the same pay grade for extended periods of time does not contribute to motivation and satisfaction. This issue therefore merits some investigation.

The data indicate that females spend significantly less time at the same pay grade (i.e., 3.72 years for females vs. 6.27 years for males). This may reflect higher turnover among women, resulting in their lower number of years of service with the DOT, and the fact that advancement is typically faster at lower pay grades. Or, it might mean that job classifications that attract a disproportionate number of women simply have more pay grades. Employees associated with district 3 demonstrated a significantly higher average length

Table 2: Average Length of Service at DOT and Average Length at Same Pay Grade by Overall, Race, Sex, Age and District Status.

Group	Average Length of Service (Yrs.)	Average Length at Same Pay Grade (Yrs.)
Overall-1984	11.46	4.92
Overall-1988	13.68	5.43
Race		
Majority	14.03	5.44
Minority	8.43*	4.83
Sex		
Male	15.65	6.27
Female	9.74*	3.72*
Age		
< 40	7.54	3.44
≥ 40	18.21*	6.90*
District		
1	13.54	4.86
2	12.76	4.62
3	16.63 <sup>a</sup>	8.85 <sup>b</sup>
4	15.61	6.22
5	13.66	4.69
6	14.26	5.98
Ames (Exc. H.D.)	13.39	5.15
Ames (H.D.)	13.34	4.81
Des Moines	9.58 <sup>a</sup>	3.67

- Notes:
- (1) An \* signifies a statistically significant difference between group characteristics ( $p \leq .05$ ).
  - (2) The <sup>a</sup> indicates that district 3 and the Des Moines district are significantly different ( $p \leq .05$ ) from each other. However, since responses from the Des Moines district are not necessarily representative, this data should be ignored.
  - (3) The <sup>b</sup> indicates that district 3 is significantly different ( $p \leq .05$ ) from districts 1, 2, 5, Ames (Exc. H.D.), Ames (H.D.) and Des Moines.

of time at the same pay grade (8.85 years), but this is largely a function of their higher average length of service (16.63 years).

Table 3: Average (M) Job Satisfaction Scores by  
Overall, Race, Sex, Age and District Status

Group	Job Satisfaction Dimension			
	Work Itself	Promotions	Supervision	Coworkers
Overall-1984	1.58	.93	1.95	2.00
Overall-1988	1.60	.89	1.88	1.99
Race				
Majority	1.60	.88	1.87	1.99
Minority	1.62	1.04	2.04	1.96
Sex				
Male	1.59	.90	1.88	1.97
Female	1.64	.87	1.87	2.04
Age				
< 40	1.53	.96	1.81	1.93
≥ 40	1.66*	.82*	1.94*	2.03
District				
1	1.55	.90	1.90	1.88
2	1.57	.87	1.85	2.03
3	1.51	.81	1.69	1.97
4	1.63	1.01	2.00	2.03
5	1.36 <sup>a</sup>	.74	1.77	1.72
6	1.49	.83	1.71	1.92
Ames (Exc. H.D.)	1.81 <sup>a</sup>	.91	1.94	2.04
Ames (H.D.)	1.71	.92	2.06	2.14
Des Moines	1.73	.96	2.09	2.15

- Notes: (1) Scores range from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 3 (very satisfied).  
 (2) An \* signifies a statistically significant difference between group characteristics ( $p \leq .05$ ).  
 (3) The <sup>a</sup> indicates that District 5 is significantly different ( $p \leq .05$ ) from the Ames (Exc. H.D.) district.

#### Job Satisfaction at the DOT

Respondents were asked to describe their level of job satisfaction along four dimensions: (1) satisfaction with the work itself (i.e., does it provide a sense of accomplishment, is it respected), (2) satisfaction with promotions (i.e., are there opportunities for advancement and upward mobility), (3) satisfaction with supervision (i.e., do supervisors exhibit tact and fairness, do they provide needed information), and (4) satisfaction with coworkers (i.e., are coworkers stimulating, responsible and intelligent). Each of

these dimensions was measured by 10 to 20 questionnaire items which were then averaged to yield a single scale score for each dimension (see Table 3). Since the scale scores could range from 0 (very dissatisfied) to 3 (very satisfied), one can regard a score around 1.5 as neutral (i.e., neither very satisfied nor dissatisfied).

Satisfaction with the work itself yielded just such an intermediary level with a mean of 1.60 for the entire sample, nearly identical to the 1984 mean of 1.58. Older agency members ( $M=1.66$ ) were appreciably more satisfied than younger members ( $M=1.53$ ). There was some noteworthy variation in satisfaction with the work itself by district. Employees working in District 5 ( $M=1.36$ ) were significantly less satisfied than employees working in the Ames (excluding the Highway Division) district ( $M=1.81$ ). One might speculate that the work in the headquarters district is felt to be more meaningful because of its implications for the entire agency. It is also important that decision makers based in Ames not regard their district as a "DOT in miniature" or test case when considering work changes likely to affect employees' opinions about the work itself (i.e., this district has the highest satisfaction with the work itself). Finally, the sex difference observed in the 1984 findings was not replicated here. In the previous study, females ( $M=1.49$ ) were significantly less satisfied with the work itself than males ( $M=1.65$ ). Perhaps efforts to diversify the number of jobs available to women at the DOT has resulted in a closer "person/job fit," which in turn has increased satisfaction with the work itself.

Satisfaction with promotions was very low with a mean of .89 for the sample as a whole, about the same as in 1984 ( $M=.93$ ). Noticeable differences occurred among the age and race employee subgroups. Older employees ( $M=.82$ )

were much less optimistic about opportunities for promotion than younger employees ( $M=.96$ ). While the sample size of minority employees was too small to generate statistically significant differences, minority employees were somewhat happier with promotions. These differences are overshadowed however by the overall low magnitude of the means. There is a common perception, now confirmed over time, that there are limited opportunities for promotion at the DOT.

Satisfaction with supervision also demonstrated a high level of consensus among DOT employees but at a much higher level. The overall mean was 1.88, similar to the 1984 mean of 1.95. Only one subgroup difference was evident. Older employees ( $M=1.94$ ) indicated greater satisfaction with supervision than younger employees ( $M=1.81$ ).

The last dimension, satisfaction with coworkers, received a similar level of endorsement with an overall mean of 1.99. In 1984, the overall mean was 2.00. There were no subgroup differences detected here. This compares favorably with a difference noted in the previous study. In 1984, minority group members were significantly less satisfied with coworkers ( $M=1.71$ ) than majority group members ( $M=2.05$ ). A convergence of opinion with respect to satisfaction with coworkers at the higher level suggests that minority employees are now much more pleased with their colleagues.

In summary, job satisfaction at the DOT appears to have maintained a steady-state since 1984. The lack of promotional opportunities continues to be a problem and is the most severe among those over 40 years of age. On the plus side, older employees were more satisfied with the work and supervision than younger employees. Moreover, women and minorities are more satisfied in some areas than they were in 1984. Indeed, race and sex no longer seem to be

associated with differential perceptions. This reduces the need to target satisfaction enhancement programs to specific employee populations.

#### Work Climate Characteristics at the DOT

Many factors, besides job satisfaction, are assumed to influence the motivation and work behavior (e.g., attendance, quality of work, expression of grievances) of employees. Among these factors is the notion of organizational climate. Organizational climate refers to a set of characteristics of the work environment, perceived directly or indirectly by the people who work in that environment. Six such characteristics were evaluated in the DOT: reward, warmth, support, standards, identity, and stress. (Note: One additional characteristic was included in the study but could not be reported in the findings because of measurement problems; i.e., poor reliability). The findings may be previewed in Table 4.

Rewards. Rewards refer to feelings of being rewarded for a job well done; emphasizing positive rewards rather than punishments, the perceived fairness of the pay and promotion policies. This characteristic of climate might also be considered an indicator of upward mobility. As it was in 1984, this characteristic of climate showed the lowest ranking of all climate dimensions (M=2.03). Also like in the previous study, older employees perceived slightly greater feelings of reward (M=2.12) than younger employees (M=2.02). The item receiving the lowest average score in rewards characteristic stated, "There is not enough reward and recognition given in this agency for doing good work" (M=1.81). While this was also the lowest rated item in 1984, it has risen from 1.67. It would seem reasonable to recommend that social rewards (e.g., recognition, praise) be maintained or increased even if financial and other extrinsic rewards cannot be increased in order to



Table 4: Average (M) Work Climate Characteristics by Overall, Race, Sex, Age and District Status

Group	Climate Dimension					
	Rewards	Warmth	Support	Standards	Identity	Stress
Overall-1984	2.06	2.70	2.35	2.79	2.44	2.43
Overall-1988	2.03	2.50	2.27	2.82	2.40	2.41
Race						
Majority	2.08	2.62	2.31	2.76	2.40	2.49
Minority	2.11	2.64	2.42	2.63	2.46	2.37
Sex						
Male	2.06	2.59	2.30	2.74	2.39	2.53
Female	2.12	2.67	2.35	2.79	2.44	2.39*
Age						
< 40	2.02	2.62	2.28	2.71	2.33	2.58
≥ 40	2.12*	2.62	2.34	2.79	2.46*	2.42*
District						
1	2.03	2.50	2.27	2.82	2.40	2.41
2	2.08	2.59	2.31	2.72	2.39	2.54
3	1.97	2.52	2.20	2.55	2.38	2.54
4	2.13	2.73	2.39	2.80	2.49	2.40
5	2.06	2.63	2.32	2.73	2.39	2.53
6	2.00	2.53	2.31	2.77	2.38	2.58
Ames (Exc.H.D.)	2.16	2.76	2.38	2.69	2.41	2.51
Ames (H.D.)	2.14	2.73	2.30	2.79	2.41	2.40
Des Moines	2.07	2.59	2.35	2.86	2.38	2.51

- Notes:
- (1) Responses range from 1 (feeling that good work is not rewarded, low warmth, etc.) to 4 (appropriate rewards, high warmth, etc.) on the first five climate measures.
  - (2) The sixth measure, stress, ranges from 1 (low stress) to 5 (high stress).
  - (3) An \* signifies a statistically significant difference between group characteristics ( $p \leq .05$ ).

alter this perception. Another interesting individual item in the scale revealed that employees do not fear their supervisors. The item, "If you make a mistake in this agency you will be punished," was reverse coded and received a high mean score of 2.76 indicating a positive view of this aspect

of the reward system (i.e., perceptions of little punishment). This finding was also replicated in the 1984 study. While it must be concluded that the reward climate perception is in general need of improvement, it is not because of excessively punitive practices.

Warmth. This characteristic describes the feeling of general good fellowship that prevails in the work group atmosphere; the emphasis on being well-liked; the prevalence of friendly and informal social groups. It received next to the highest overall rating (M=2.50), suggesting that the agency is viewed by most as a relaxed, friendly place to work. This compares to a similarly high mean (2.70) reported in 1984. However, it should be noted that a drop from 2.70 to 2.50 is not a desirable trend. No statistically significant differences in warmth were associated with race, sex, age or district status.

Support. Support refers to the perceived helpfulness of the managers and other employees in the group; the emphasis on mutual support from above and below. The overall mean (M=2.27) on this characteristic suggests that perceptions of support are a bit low if one regards the hypothetical midpoint of 2.5 as an average rating. The subgroup analysis revealed no significant differences in perceptions of support associated with race, sex, age or district. A clearer understanding of this characteristic can be achieved through an examination of items used in this scale. One item reflecting the degree to which employees believe they can count on getting job assistance from others received an exceptionally high mean of 2.93. Indeed this item was the highest rated work climate item both in this study and the 1984 study. It implies some very positive things about the level of teamwork at the DOT. The overall support rating suffered, however, because of low

agreement (M=1.93) with statements like, "Management makes an effort to talk with you about your career aspirations within the agency." This finding appears related to the previously discussed low level of satisfaction with promotions and is consistent with the 1984 survey results. Whether "management" avoids discussing career aspirations because of a limited number of promotional opportunities or employees do not appreciate promotional opportunities available to them because "management" has not helped them with career development, or both, cannot be determined from this survey. However, the consistent endorsement of this belief suggests that this issue merits further investigation.

Standards. This characteristic describes the perceived importance of implicit and explicit goals and performance standards; the emphasis on doing a good job; the challenge represented in personal and group goals. The perception that high standards are maintained at the DOT received the highest overall rating of any climate characteristic (M=2.82) and is even higher than the 1984 findings (M=2.79). There were no differential results associated with race, sex, age or district. As a large and necessarily bureaucratic agency concerned with public safety and service, the DOT should take particular pride in the fact that it has engendered a culture where high standards are valued and operational. As in most organizations, however, there is still room for improvement.

Identity. Identity refers to the feeling that you belong to an organization and that you are a valuable member of a working team. It also refers to the importance others place on this kind of spirit. The overall rating of this characteristic (M=2.40) places it near the middle of the theoretical 1 to 4 range, implying that a moderate feeling of identity exists. Older

respondents (M=2.46) were slightly more likely to have higher feelings of identity than younger respondents (M=2.33), but this sense of increased commitment is common among all long tenured workers (a factor which covaries with age) and is thus not particularly useful information.

Stress. Stress is the reaction of individuals to characteristics of the work environment that pose a threat. It reflects the degree to which the individual and the environment "fit." It should be noted that stress can occur when the environment asks too much or too little from employees. Moreover, there is wide variability in people's ability to handle stress. Lastly, not all stress is bad. Some stress is believed to be beneficial because it keeps workers alert to environmental changes, helps them to avoid complacency and can stimulate higher levels of motivation. Stated differently, a little performance anxiety, like a little bit of stage fright, keeps employees on their toes.

Stress was measured a bit differently from the other climate characteristics. Here, a 1 to 5 scale was used with high scores indicative of high stress. The overall average rating for stress was 2.41, suggesting that the DOT is not an overly stressful work environment. Moreover, this finding is virtually identical to the stress level reported in 1984 (M=2.43). Lower levels of stress were reported among older employees (M=2.42) as compared to younger employees (M=2.58). This finding also parallels the 1984 results. Somewhat surprising is the lower level of stress evident among females (M=2.39) relative to males (M=2.53). One can only speculate as to the reasons behind this finding since it was not observed in 1984. Common causes of work related stress are: role ambiguity (not knowing what is expected), role conflict (presence of incompatible work expectations), role overload

(being asked to do too much), role underutilization (not having one's skills and talents fully utilized), too much responsibility for other people, and lack of participation in or authority to make decisions. An examination of the individual stress items suggest that dissatisfaction with decision-making, role conflict and role overload are the major stress factors at the DOT. These were also identified as contributors to stress in 1984. Since perceptions of what is stressful can vary significantly from individual to individual, it might be better to target stress reduction efforts toward those employees who describe themselves as experiencing stress, rather than simply toward younger or male employees. On the other hand, reduction of such factors as role conflict and role overload are likely to benefit everyone.

In summary, employees' perceptions of the work climate at the DOT is much the same as it was in 1984. The standards dimension is judged to be good while warmth, support, identity and stress are acceptable. The rewards dimension would benefit from improvement. Subgroup differences are minimal and do not merit special consideration.

#### Skill Utilization and Job Overqualification

One of the questions organizational leaders frequently consider is the extent to which they are fully utilizing the talents and abilities of their human resources. In labor intensive and public service agencies, the optimal use of the human component is particularly important in that assigning employees to appropriate jobs has a direct bearing on organizational productivity and public image. In this section, the extent to which employees at the DOT feel that their talents are being fully utilized is considered. Since there is a common tendency to attribute one's own job performance

inadequacies and dissatisfactions to external conditions like job assignment, rather than internal characteristics like job skill and willingness to work hard, these findings should not be viewed as objective information about labor force utilization. Instead, they describe the extent to which employees believe they have achieved a good "person/job fit." Low levels of fit may be caused by a number of factors. Among them are inappropriate job assignment, nonrealistic employee or management perception of what the job entails, nonrealistic perception of one's abilities, perceptions of being overqualified for one's job, and a perceived lack of growth opportunities over time. Lastly, when "person/job fit" is less than optimal, employees sometimes apply for different jobs in the organization. The frequency of this behavior is also analyzed here.

Skill utilization. Skill utilization was evaluated directly by asking respondents how much of the time they felt their abilities, education and experience were well utilized and, indirectly, by asking how much of the time they felt satisfied with their jobs at the DOT. In addition, respondents were asked if they could have their choice of any job, would they prefer, (a) their present job, (b) a more responsible job at the DOT, (c) a similar job in another organization or (d) a job in another occupation. The findings connected with these questions are presented in Table 5.

The respondents indicated that they felt their abilities were well utilized about 58% of the time and that 73% indicated that they were satisfied with their jobs more than half of the time. This compares with 64% and 69%, respectively, in 1984. These small differences are probably not indicative of any real change. The only subgroup findings that are troublesome involve racial differences and interdistrict differences in the percep-

Table 5: Reactions to Skill Utilization and Job Preference by Overall, Race, Sex, Age, and District Status

Group	Percent Who					
	Believe abilities utilized	Satisfied > half time	Prefer present job	Prefer more responsible job	Prefer different organization	Prefer different occupation
Overall-1984	63.6	69.4	29.6	40.2	15.1	15.1
Overall-1988	58.4	73.0	31.7	46.8	10.5	11.0
Race						
Majority	59.3	72.9	32.9	45.8	10.3	11.0
Minority	44.2	73.1	17.6	60.8	9.8	11.8
Sex						
Male	56.4	73.8	31.8	48.6	10.4	9.2
Female	62.5	70.7	32.2	42.0	11.0	14.9
Age						
< 40	52.9	67.0	21.1	54.3	11.5	13.0
≥ 40	62.4	77.2	39.4	41.1	9.9	9.6
District						
1	59.1	71.6	27.9	47.7	9.3	15.1
2	49.4	76.4	27.0	51.7	12.4	9.0
3	58.9	74.0	30.6	52.8	11.1	5.6
4	52.9	73.6	34.5	51.7	6.9	6.9
5	58.5	67.7	39.7	28.6	14.3	17.5
6	66.7	75.6	36.0	41.6	9.0	13.5
Ames (Exc.H.D.)	61.6	71.7	32.7	44.9	9.2	13.3
Ames (H.D.)	59.8	69.1	22.9	50.0	13.5	13.5
Des Moines	67.9	67.9	39.6	43.4	9.4	7.5

tion of the extent to which skills are well utilized. Minority employees are less inclined to report that their skills are well utilized compared to majority employees (44.2% vs. 59.3%). The same general pattern was also observed in 1984 (i.e., 45.0% of minorities indicating appropriate skill utilization, 66.8% among majority group members). Taken together these findings suggest that minorities continue to feel their skills are not being well utilized and that this feeling is increasingly being shared by majority

group members. Interdistrict differences are evident between district 2 (49.4% reporting good skill utilization) and district 6 (66.7%) and Des Moines (67.9%). The lower level of skill use in district 2 merits examination. The indirect approach to the evaluation of skill utilization using ideal job preferences complements this analysis.

The data on ideal job preference have not changed much between 1984 and 1988. In 1988, 46.8% of the respondents displayed a preference for a more responsible job at the DOT while 31.7% preferred their present job. Negligible percentages preferred similar jobs in different organizations or different occupations altogether. Racial differences were again evident with 60.8% of the minority group members preferring a more responsible job compared to 45.8% of the majority group members. Only 17.6% of the minorities prefer their current job, again suggesting low perceptions of "person/job fit" and skill utilization. District 5 was interesting although not readily interpretable. Only 28.6% of this district preferred a more responsible job at the DOT while higher than average percentages preferred work in a different organization (14.3%) or work in a different occupation (17.5%).

Job overqualification. In an attempt to try and delineate the factors which influence perceived skill utilization, two measures were added to the 1988 survey. The first, perceived overqualification, consisted of four items measuring the extent to which employees feel underemployed or overqualified (e.g., feel that their work experience or formal education is greater than that necessary to do the job). The second measure, termed perceived lack of growth opportunities, consisted of four items focusing on the extent to which employees feel that their jobs do not change and provide limited opportunities for learning new things. Responses to both of these measures ranged



from (1) low perceived overqualification/growth opportunities to (5) high perceived overqualification/growth opportunities. The findings associated with these two factors are presented in Table 6.

Both forms of overqualification were rated around 3.00 overall, suggesting that perceptions of overqualification are not widespread among DOT employees (i.e.,  $M=3.01$  and  $M=2.84$ ). Thus, problems with skill utilization do not appear to be caused by the existence of jobs with low challenge or few opportunities for change. Rather, the issue seems to be more related to employees' perceptions of the extent to which their skills and abilities are fully used on the job. The item "My talents are not fully used on my job" illustrates this point. Only 12% of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. If skills were being regularly and fully used, employees should have strongly disagreed with this statement.

By combining the skill utilization, overqualification and job satisfaction data, the impression which emerges is that DOT employees like their jobs and find them stimulating. They are assigned to jobs appropriate for their education. However, they also feel ready and capable of contributing to the agency in a more responsible job because of their work experience. Since opportunities for advancement are seen as limited, they perceive themselves as "stuck" in their present positions. Stated differently, the work is seen as meaningful and challenging. Employees just want to perform it in a higher level position carrying more responsibility, authority, status and yes, probably pay. Developing more generalized career paths where employees rotate through a wider variety of jobs before advancing to a higher organizational level might help to decrease perceptions of overqualification and increase perceptions of growth opportunities. However, these changes do not

Table 6: Average (M) Perceptions of Overqualification and Lack of Growth Opportunities by Overall, Race, Sex, Age and District Status

Group	Form of Overqualification	
	Perceived Overqualification	Lack of Growth Opportunities
Overall-1988	3.01	2.84
Race		
Majority	3.00	2.84
Minority	3.14	2.81
Sex		
Male	2.99	2.80
Female	3.03	2.93*
Age		
< 40	3.07	2.87
≥ 40	2.96	2.82
District		
1	3.02	2.89
2	3.12	2.94
3	2.99	2.88
4	2.92	2.78
5	2.86	2.84
6	2.93	2.85
Ames (Exc.H.D.)	2.98	2.68
Ames (H.D.)	3.09	2.95
Des Moines	2.79	3.01

Notes: (1) Scores range from 1 (low overqualification/growth) to 5 (high overqualification/growth).  
 (2) An \* signifies a statistically significant difference between group characteristics ( $p \leq .05$ ).

adequately address the genuine desire for more responsibility and authority.

Introducing more levels in the organizational hierarchy (i.e., creating a taller organization) for this purpose is not a good idea either. More rapid turnover in the higher level positions is probably the only way the problem of skill utilization can be resolved effectively.

Job change behavior. When employees perceive that their present posi-

tions are not fully utilizing their skills, they often apply for other jobs in the same organization. This observation seems to hold true for the DOT as 34.2% of the sample reported that they had applied for positions at the DOT during the last three years that they did not get. This percentage would be even higher if it included those who were successful in securing their job change. Given that 41.6% of the sample indicated that their skills were not well utilized (based on Table 5), it is good to see that so many employees attempt to achieve a better "person/job fit" on their own initiative.

It is more instructive, however, to observe what factors were seen as contributing to the denial of these job changes. When a more qualified person is selected or when applicants view themselves as one of several qualified applicants, employees perceive the system to be operating fairly. When other factors are cited, there is a greater tendency for morale to be adversely affected. Table 7 identifies seven such other factors which might exist.

Both in 1988 and 1984, the factor most frequently cited in explaining why a job was denied was preselection by the hiring authority (i.e., 61.0% and 69.4%, respectively). Enforcement of Affirmative Action (AA) guidelines (15.8%), race discrimination (8.7%), and other explanations (25.7%) remained about the same. Age discrimination declined from 18.1% in 1984 to 9.9% in 1988 while sex and reverse discrimination increased. The increase in reverse discrimination seems logical when the exceptionally high proportion of white males working at the DOT is considered (i.e., when an organization is not experiencing growth and AA goals related to advancement are being realized, non-protected subgroup members are likely to feel short-changed).

In summary, the data related to job change behavior indicate that DOT

Table 7: Perceptions of Persons Denied Other Jobs Within the DOT

Persons Attributing Denial At Least Partially to:	Percent	
	1984	1988
1. Preselection by hiring authority	69.4	61.0
2. AA guidelines favored others	13.9	15.8
3. Age discrimination	18.1	9.9
4. Sex discrimination	5.6	9.1
5. Race discrimination	9.7	8.7
6. Reverse discrimination	5.6	11.5
7. Other (e.g., handicap, unwilling to relocate)	25.0	25.7

Note: This analysis is based on 253 respondents indicating that they had applied for another job within the DOT which they did not get. Age discrimination may have been reported by respondents less than 40 years of age. Reverse discrimination was not defined but intended to be interpreted as being penalized for being a majority group member.

employees are motivated to seek jobs which better fit their skills and interests. When not selected for these jobs, they tend to believe that the hiring authority had already identified the successful applicant prior to the selection process. As noted in 1984, this form of bias is very difficult to overcome. Those charged with hiring responsibilities should be counseled to be more open-minded in making selection decisions. It might also be useful to provide more explicit feedback to non-selected applicants concerning why they were not chosen for a given position.

#### Sexual Harassment

Since 1984 the DOT has undertaken a number of activities designed to eliminate sexual harassment (e.g., educational programs explaining what sexual harassment is, what supervisors should do when a complaint is made). This programming has been very effective. Over 96% or 739 of 769 employees

reported that they know and understand what sexual harassment is.

Since sexual harassment is primarily an issue which affects female employees, only their responses are evaluated here.

Fifty-two (20.3%) of the females in the study reported that they had been victims of sexual harassment while working at the DOT (see Table 8). Approximately half (44.8%) of these women reported the harassment to management. While perhaps more of these women should have reported this behavior to management, they may also have handled the problem on their own. These percentages represent a slight increase over 1984. The previous survey revealed that 14.6% (N=21) of the female respondents had experienced sexual harassment and slightly over half of the victims (52.4%, N=11) reported it to management. Because of the small numbers reporting harassment in 1984 it is not appropriate to make inferences about change between 1984 and 1988. In addition, what constituted sexual harassment in 1984 may not have been well understood.

Finally, in recognition that other forms of harassment may exist, the 1988 survey included the question "Have you ever felt you have been a victim of any other forms of harassment (e.g., excessive horseplay, hazing, practical jokes)?" Over 17% or 132 respondents reported that they had been a victim of some form of harassment. Such a high percentage may justify further investigation of this topic.

#### Communication, Information Adequacy and Morale

In developing the 1988 survey a great deal of emphasis was placed on monitoring change since 1984. There were also other issues which the Morale Committee felt had emerged since the previous study. Generally, these

Table 8: Female Respondents' (N=256) Report of Sexual Harassment at the DOT

<u>Experience of Harassment</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
No response	1	.4
No	197	77.0
Not sure	6	2.3
Yes	<u>52</u>	<u>20.3</u>
Total:	256 <sup>b</sup>	100.0
<u>Response<sup>a</sup></u>		
Report to management	26	44.8
Did not report to management	28	48.3
No response	<u>4</u>	<u>6.9</u>
Total:	58	100.0

Note: The <sup>a</sup> indicates that this data represents only the 58 respondents who indicated they had experienced sexual harassment or were not sure if they had experienced sexual harassment. The <sup>b</sup> indicates that this includes six women who did not report their race and thus represent the unknown category in Table 1.

issues centered on communication and morale. The communication areas investigated included the overall quality and quantity of information communicated and specific aspects of communication (e.g., availability, usefulness).

Quality of information. Quality of information at the DOT was assessed by asking respondents how satisfied they were with the quality of information they received from their immediate supervisors (downward communication), their peers (lateral communication), their subordinates, if applicable (upward communication), the district office (downward communication), and the Human Resources Bureau (organization wide communication). Response options ranged from 1 (incorrect, not useful information) to 5 (accurate, useful information). Overall, the quality of information associated with each source was good. Scores ranged from 3.23 (subordinates) to 3.72 (immediate supervisors), all above the hypothetical mid-point of 3.00 (see Table 9).

Table 9: Average (M) Quality of Information from Various Sources by Overall and District Status

Group	Quality of Information From				Human Resources Bureau
	Immediate Supervisors	Peers	Subordinates	District Office	
Overall-1988	3.72	3.49	3.23	3.43	3.28
District					
1	3.79	3.51	3.21	3.39	3.32
2	3.62	3.31	3.37	3.26	3.14
3	3.53	3.53	3.09	3.39	3.18
4	3.80	3.62	3.17	3.31	3.26
5	3.57	3.46	3.15	3.53	3.47
6	3.72	3.44	3.15	3.56	3.26
Ames (Exc.H.D.)	3.66	3.56	3.20	3.44	3.21
Ames (H.D.)	3.79	3.44	3.15	3.47	3.26
Des Moines	4.08	3.55	3.33	3.65	3.53

Notes: (1) Responses range from 1 (incorrect or not useful information) to 5 (accurate, useful information).

There were no significant differences by district. While there is always room for improvement, it is reassuring to note that the most important communication link, that associated with immediate supervisors, was rated highly.

Quantity of information. This aspect of communication was measured in the same manner as quality of information (see Table 10). Response options ranged from 1 (too little or too much) to 5 (just right). Thus this measure recognizes that too much information, like too little information, can detract from employee performance. Satisfaction with the quantity of information was moderate, with means ranging from 2.83 (the Human Resources

Table 10: Average (M) Quantity of Information from Various Sources by Overall and District Status

Group	Quantity of Information From				
	Immediate Supervisors	Peers	Subordinates	District Office	Human Resources Bureau
Overall-1988	3.13	3.18	3.07	2.93	2.83
District					
1	3.11	3.00	3.03	3.03	2.87
2	2.97	3.07	3.27	2.88	2.89
3	2.99	3.24	3.04	2.97	2.67
4	3.23	3.30	3.13	2.80	2.80
5	3.14	3.22	3.10	3.21	3.03
6	3.08	3.12	2.85	3.04	3.02
Ames (Exc.H.D.)	2.93	3.27	3.20	2.33 <sup>a</sup>	2.60
Ames (H.D.)	3.39	3.15	2.85	3.03	2.73
Des Moines	3.40	3.43	3.07	3.22	2.94

Notes: (1) Responses range from 1 (too little or too much information) to 5 (just right information).  
 (2) The <sup>a</sup> indicates that the Ames (Exc. H.D.) district is significantly different ( $p \leq .05$ ) from district 5 and the Des Moines district. Respondents from the Ames (Exc. H.D.) district may have been unclear as to what the district office meant.

Bureau) to 3.18 (peers). The latter finding is not surprising given the relatively high level of satisfaction with co-workers. District differences were minor. These means, however, are noticeably lower than those associated with the quality of information responses and two of the overall means are less than the 3.00 midpoint. This implies that the quality of information may be acceptable but the quantity is not. While it is possible that there may be excessive communication from time to time, the dissatisfaction with communication quantity is probably more related to an inadequate amount of information.

Specific aspects of communication. Many forms of job related communica-



tion exist at DOT (e.g., Inside TV Report, Inside Magazine, bulletin boards, meetings, performance evaluations). Collectively, these information sources were rated on their availability, usefulness, and accuracy (see Table 11). Availability was rated from 1 (never) to 5 (always), usefulness was rated from 1 (no use) to 5 (very useful) and accuracy was rated from 1 (not accurate) to 5 (very accurate). Availability received the highest overall rating ( $M=3.96$ ) followed by accuracy ( $M=3.60$ ) and usefulness ( $M=3.30$ ). While there were no race, age or district differences associated with these ratings, females rated each aspect of communication more highly than males. To the extent that females are more heavily involved in clerical work, they may be more aware or sensitive to the written forms of communication.

Since usefulness was rated the lowest of all three forms of evaluation, the individual communication sources were examined more closely (see Table 12). The usefulness of each communication source ranged from 2.07 (grapevine, rumors) to 4.23 (telephone). Given the resource commitments attached to some of these communication devices, it is recommended that sources rated around the midpoint of 3.00 or less in usefulness be reviewed (i.e., Inside TV Report, Inside Magazine, grapevine/rumors, performance evaluations).

The last aspect of communication investigation was that of information dissemination. Respondents were asked six questions focusing on the extent to which a lack of information negatively affects their job performance. Responses ranged from 1 to 5 with five indicative of good dissemination (see Table 11). The overall rating of 2.40 indicates that there are some problems with information dissemination at the DOT. Younger employees are even more likely to express dissatisfaction with information dissemination. The two items receiving the lowest ratings were "How often do you find that you could

Table 11: Average (M) Communication by Overall, Race, Sex, Age and District Status

Group	Communication			
	Availability	Usefulness	Accuracy	Dissemination
Overall-1988	3.96	3.30	3.60	2.40
Race				
Majority	3.95	3.29	3.60	2.40
Minority	3.86	3.31	3.56	2.47
Sex				
Male	3.89	3.20	3.53	2.38
Female	4.07*	3.49*	3.74*	2.45
Age				
< 40	3.93	3.28	3.55	2.29
≥ 40	3.96	3.31	3.63	2.48*
District				
1	3.83	3.24	3.45	2.47
2	3.75	3.25	3.49	2.31
3	3.91	3.20	3.52	2.44
4	3.97	3.30	3.62	2.37
5	3.93	3.30	3.47	2.39
6	4.04	3.23	3.55	2.37
Ames (Exc.H.D.)	4.11	3.49	3.81	2.38
Ames (H.D.)	4.04	3.31	3.71	2.54
Des Moines	4.00	3.33	3.70	2.39

Notes: (1) Responses range from (poor communication) to 5 (good communication).

(2) An \* signifies a statistically significant difference between group characteristics ( $p \leq .05$ ).

have done a better job if you had known about information that was available elsewhere?" (M=1.80) and "How often do you feel that information just doesn't reach you?" (M=1.97). These questions pinpoint the nature of the problem: relevant information is not getting to the people who need it in a timely fashion. Notice that this is consistent with the lower ratings associated with the quantity of information available. Note too that the problem is as

Table 12: Average (M) Usefulness Ratings Associated with Various Communication Sources

<u>Source</u>	<u>Usefulness Rating</u>
1. Inside TV Report	2.58
2. Inside magazine	3.02
3. Memos, letters	3.68
4. Bulletin boards	3.53
5. Handbooks, etc.	4.00
6. Newsletters	3.30
7. Meetings	3.36
8. Telephone	4.23
9. Grapevine, rumors	2.07
10. Performance evaluation	2.98
11. Check stuffers	3.47

prevalent in the Ames and Des Moines districts as in the outlying districts. This issue thus warrants organization-wide study and consideration.

Morale. As used here, morale encompasses a wide range of topics related to overall satisfaction with the DOT. The items used to evaluate morale focus on satisfaction with DOT management staff, the immediate supervisor, opportunities for advancement and fringe benefits. Table 13 reports the findings which reflect response options ranging from 1 (low morale) to 4 (high morale).

The overall morale score was near the middle of the scale's range (M=2.53). Thus, morale is judged to be average. This conclusion is further supported by the absence of any race, sex, age or district grouping

Table 13: Average (M) Morale Ratings by Overall, Race, Sex, Age and District Status.

Group	Overall Morale	Selected Morale Items			
		Can advance without people leaving	Relocation not necessary for promotion	Mgmt staff visit often enough	DOT offers useful benefits
Overall-1988	2.53	1.74	2.16	2.45	2.24
Race					
Majority	2.53	1.73	2.16	2.43	2.24
Minority	2.50	1.92	2.06	2.02*	2.22
Sex					
Male	2.51	1.69	2.02	2.45	2.23
Female	2.58	1.85*	2.44*	2.47	2.26
Age					
< 40	2.50	1.65	2.27	2.42	2.13
≥ 40	2.56	1.82*	2.07*	2.49	2.32*
District					
1	2.51	1.81	2.05	2.45	2.24
2	2.52	1.74	2.02	2.58	2.30
3	2.43	1.61	1.78	2.30	2.14
4	2.58	1.72	1.90	2.56	2.33
5	2.48	1.71	1.77	2.69	2.08
6	2.48	1.72	1.81	2.51	2.26
Ames (Exc.H.D.)	2.57	1.83	2.85 <sup>a</sup>	2.27	2.20
Ames (H.D.)	2.58	1.70	2.61 <sup>a</sup>	2.41	2.25
Des Moines	2.60	1.84	2.48 <sup>b</sup>	2.52	2.25

- Notes: (1) Responses range from 1 (low morale) to 4 (high morale).  
 (2) An \* signifies a statistically significant difference between group characteristics ( $p < .05$ ).  
 (3) The <sup>a</sup> indicates that both district 7 and 8 are significantly different ( $p \leq .05$ ) from districts 1 through 6.  
 (4) The <sup>b</sup> indicates that the Des Moines district is significantly different ( $p \leq .05$ ) from districts 3, 5 and 6.

differences. There were some differences among the groups however with respect to some of the individual items comprising the morale scale. In addition, these items were also rated lower than others in the scale.

Accordingly, some items were selected for closer scrutiny and these findings are also reported in Table 13.

The idea that people can advance readily at the DOT without others leaving or without relocating was rejected by many respondents. The means for these two items were 1.74 and 2.16, respectively. Males thought that advancement was even more unlikely than females. Older employees demonstrated an interesting split on this item. They were more optimistic about advancement without people leaving ( $M=1.82$ ) but less enthusiastic about advancement without relocation ( $M=2.07$ ). Respondents in the Ames and Des Moines districts, not surprisingly, thought advancement without relocation was more possible than respondents residing in the other districts. The notion that DOT management staff visit employees at their place of work often enough was rated near the scale mean overall ( $M=2.46$ ). However, minority employees endorsed this idea far less frequently ( $M=2.02$ ). Minority employees do not perceive they are receiving as much attention as they feel they should from DOT management staff. Finally, with respect to benefits, overall satisfaction is low. The statement, "The DOT offers benefits which meet my needs", received an overall rating of 2.24. Younger employees ( $M=2.13$ ) were less satisfied than older employees ( $M=2.32$ ). This suggests that benefit packages should be re-examined at the DOT.

#### Summary

An overall summary as provided in the Executive Summary, page iii.

## Appendices

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## Appendix A

Table A: Selection of District Sample by Sex

<u>District Affiliation</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Target Sample</u>		
		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
District 1	398	93	34 <sup>a</sup>	127
District 2	344	85	24 <sup>a</sup>	109
District 3	316	82	19 <sup>a</sup>	101
District 4	349	92	20 <sup>a</sup>	112
District 5	311	80	20 <sup>a</sup>	100
District 6	447	116	27 <sup>a</sup>	143
Ames (Exc. H.D.)	576	92	92	184
Ames (H.D.)	495	80	78 <sup>a</sup>	158
Des Moines	<u>527</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>168</u>
Grand Totals	3763	804	398	1202

Note: <sup>a</sup> indicates that these are all of the female employees affiliated with the district.

## IOWA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATIONAL SURVEY

SECTION I. General Employment Information

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Number of years at DOT _____               | 4. Where do you presently work?                 |
| 2. Sex: Male _____ Female _____               | Dist. 1 _____ District 6 _____                  |
| 3. Number of years at current pay grade _____ | Dist. 2 _____ Ames (exclud. Highway Div.) _____ |
|   | Dist. 3 _____ Ames (Highway Div.) _____         |
|   | Dist. 4 _____ Des Moines _____                  |
|   | Dist. 5 _____                                   |

SECTION II. Job Satisfaction

A. Work: Think of your present work. What is it like most of the time? In the blanks beside each word or phrase, write Y for "Yes", it describes my work, or N for "NO", it does not describe my work, or ? for "sometimes" or "undecided."

- |                      |                     |   |
|----------------------|---------------------|---|
| 1. _____ Fascinating | 7. _____ Respected  | 13. _____ Challenging                     |
| 2. _____ Routine     | 8. _____ Hot/Cold   | 14. _____ On your feet                    |
| 3. _____ Satisfying  | 9. _____ Pleasant   | 15. _____ Frustrating                     |
| 4. _____ Boring      | 10. _____ Useful    | 16. _____ Simple                          |
| 5. _____ Good        | 11. _____ Tiresome  | 17. _____ Endless                         |
| 6. _____ Creative    | 12. _____ Healthful | 18. _____ Gives a sense of accomplishment |

B. Promotions: Now consider opportunity for advancement. Answer in the same manner.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 19. _____ Good opportunity for advancement | 24. _____ Infrequent promotions            |
| 20. _____ Opportunity somewhat limited     | 25. _____ Regular promotions               |
| 21. _____ Promotion on ability             | 26. _____ Fairly good chance of promotions |
| 22. _____ Good chance for promotion        | 27. _____ Dead end job                     |
| 23. _____ Unfair promotion policy          | 28. _____ I have advanced                  |

C. Supervisor: Think about your supervisor. Answer in the same manner as above.

- |                                    |  |   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 29. _____ Asks my advice           | 37. _____ Quick-tempered                         | 43. _____ Bad   |
| 30. _____ Hard to please           | 38. _____ Tells me where I stand                 | 44. _____ Intelligent                                 |
| 31. _____ Impolite                 | 39. _____ Annoying                               | 45. _____ Leaves me on my own                         |
| 32. _____ Praises good work        | 40. _____ Makes me aware of career opportunities | 46. _____ Around when needed                          |
| 33. _____ Tactful                  | 41. _____ Stubborn                               | 47. _____ Informs me of DOT educational opportunities |
| 34. _____ Influential              | 42. _____ Knows job well                         | 48. _____ Evaluates my work fairly                    |
| 35. _____ Up-to-date               |  |   |
| 36. _____ Doesn't supervise enough |  |   |

D. Co-Workers: Now consider the majority of co-workers you work with on a daily basis. Answer in the same manner.

- |                       |                                |                            |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 49. _____ Stimulating | 55. _____ Fast                 | 61. _____ Unpleasant       |
| 50. _____ Boring      | 56. _____ Intelligent          | 62. _____ No privacy       |
| 51. _____ Slow        | 57. _____ Easy to make enemies | 63. _____ Active           |
| 52. _____ Ambitious   | 58. _____ Talk too much        | 64. _____ Narrow interests |
| 53. _____ Stupid      | 59. _____ Smart                | 65. _____ Loyal            |
| 54. _____ Responsible | 60. _____ Lazy                 | 66. _____ Hard to meet     |





C. What are your opinions on information availability? Please circle the number that best matches your opinion.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
Never      Occasionally      Sometimes      Often      Very frequently

1. How often do you find that you could have done a better job if you had known about information that was available elsewhere?  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
2. How often do you receive more information (e.g., memos, meetings) than you feel you need?  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
3. How often does a lack of information negatively affect your job performance?  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
4. How often do you feel that information is intentionally kept from you?  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
5. How often do you feel that information just doesn't reach you?  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
6. How often do you have trouble getting correct answers to questions related to such things as IPERS, insurance and benefits?  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
7. How often does too much information (i.e., information overload) negatively affect your job performance?  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5

#### SECTION IV. Perceptions of Work Environment

Respond to the following statements about your job or the DOT in general by noting 1 for Definitely Agree; 2 for Inclined to Agree; 3 for Inclined to Disagree; or 4 for Definitely Disagree in the space provided.

##### A. Structure

1. \_\_\_\_ The jobs in this agency are clearly defined and logically structured.
2. \_\_\_\_ In this agency it is sometimes unclear who has the formal authority to make a decision.
3. \_\_\_\_ The policies and organization structure of this agency have been clearly explained.
4. \_\_\_\_ Red tape is kept to a minimum in this agency.
5. \_\_\_\_ Excessive rules, administrative details, and red tape make it difficult for new and original ideas to receive consideration.
6. \_\_\_\_ Our productivity sometimes suffers from lack of organization and planning.
7. \_\_\_\_ In some of the projects I've been on, I haven't been sure exactly who my boss was.
8. \_\_\_\_ Our management isn't so concerned about formal organization and authority, but concentrates instead on getting the right people together to do the job.

**B. Reward**

1. ☐ We have a promotion system that helps the best individual to rise to the top.
2. ☐ There is not enough reward and recognition given in this agency for doing good work.
3. ☐ In this agency people are rewarded in proportion to the excellence of their job performance.
4. ☐ There is a great deal of criticism of this agency by employees.
5. ☐ In this agency the rewards and encouragements you get usually outweigh the threats and the criticism.
6. ☐ If you make a mistake in this agency you will be punished.

**C. Warmth**

1. ☐ A friendly atmosphere prevails among the people in this agency.
2. ☐ This agency is characterized by a relaxed, easy-going working climate.
3. ☐ It is very hard to get to know people in this agency.
4. ☐ People in this agency tend to be cool and aloof toward each other.
5. ☐ There is a lot of warmth in the relationships between management and workers in this agency.

**D. Support**

1. ☐ You don't get much sympathy from higher-ups in this agency if you make a mistake.
2. ☐ Management makes an effort to talk with you about your career aspirations within the agency.
3. ☐ People in this agency don't really trust each other enough.
4. ☐ The philosophy of our management emphasizes the human factor, how people feel, etc.
5. ☐ When I am on a difficult assignment I can usually count on getting assistance from my boss and co-workers.

**E. Standards**

1. ☐ In this agency we set very high standards for performance.
2. ☐ Our management believes that no job is so well done that it can't be improved on.
3. ☐ Around here there is a feeling of pressure to continually improve our personal and group performance.

**F. Identity**

1. ☐ People are proud of working in this agency.

2. \_\_\_\_ I feel that I am a member of a well functioning team.
3. \_\_\_\_ As far as I can see, there isn't very much personal loyalty to the agency.
4. \_\_\_\_ In this agency people pretty much look out for their own interests.

G. Morale

1. \_\_\_\_ The DOT goes out of its way to recognize employees for extraordinary service.
2. \_\_\_\_ I could advance at the DOT if I changed career fields.
3. \_\_\_\_ There are few opportunities for employees to give their opinions about morale.
4. \_\_\_\_ I feel free to talk to my supervisor about anything related to my job.
5. \_\_\_\_ DOT management staff visit my operation often enough.
6. \_\_\_\_ I cannot advance at the DOT unless people above me leave or retire.
7. \_\_\_\_ The DOT offers benefits which meet my needs..
8. \_\_\_\_ Too much work time is devoted to social activities.
9. \_\_\_\_ DOT management staff do not seem to appreciate my work related problems.
10. \_\_\_\_ I feel I can talk to my supervisor about problems and difficulties on my job without it being "held against me" later.
11. \_\_\_\_ In order to get a promotion at the DOT, I would have to relocate.
12. \_\_\_\_ I feel the DOT has my best interests at heart.
13. \_\_\_\_ My supervisor is not very receptive to my ideas and suggestions.
14. \_\_\_\_ I really feel a part of the DOT.
15. \_\_\_\_ The DOT offers too many benefits which I am not really interested in.
16. \_\_\_\_ I cannot be promoted at the DOT unless I change the area in which I work.
17. \_\_\_\_ DOT management staff really try to understand my day-to-day work activities.

SECTION V. Working Climate: Please answer the questions below by circling one of the following:

1-Never; 2-Rarely; 3-Sometimes; 4-Rather often; 5-Nearly all the time

A. How frequently are you concerned at work by:

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Feeling that you have too little authority to carry out the responsibilities assigned to you. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Being unclear on just what the scope and responsibilities of your job are.                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

1=Never; 2=Rarely; 3-Sometimes; 4=Rather often; 5=Nearly all the time

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. Not knowing what opportunities for advancement or promotion exist for you.                                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. Feeling that you have too heavy a work load, one that you can't possibly finish during an ordinary working day. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. Thinking that you'll not be able to satisfy the conflicting demands of various people over you.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Feeling that you're not fully qualified to handle your job.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. Not knowing what your immediate supervisor thinks of you, how he or she evaluates your performance.             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. The fact that you can't get information needed to carry out your job.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. Having to decide things that affect the lives of individuals, people that you know.                             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Feeling that you may not be liked and accepted by the people you work with.                                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Feeling unable to influence your immediate supervisor's decisions and actions that affect you.                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. Not knowing just what the people you work with expect of you.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. Thinking that the <u>amount</u> of work you have to do may interfere with how <u>well</u> it gets done.        | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Feeling that you have to do things on the job that are against your better judgment.                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Feeling that your job tends to interfere with your family life.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**B. Personal Attitude Toward Job**

1. How much of the time do you feel satisfied with your job at the DOT? Choose one.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> All of the time         | e. <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time        | f. <input type="checkbox"/> Seldom       |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> A good deal of the time | g. <input type="checkbox"/> Never        |
| d. <input type="checkbox"/> About half of the time  |  |

2. If you could have your choice of any job, would you choose: (Mark only one)

- |   |
|---|
| a. <input type="checkbox"/> A more responsible job at the DOT?                              |
| b. <input type="checkbox"/> Your present job at the DOT?                                    |
| c. <input type="checkbox"/> A job similar to what you now have but in another organization? |
| d. <input type="checkbox"/> A job in another occupation?                                    |

### C. Job Opinions

Below are sentences that tell how DOT people might feel. For each sentence, indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by circling the number that matches how you feel.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly				Strongly
Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Agree

1. My formal education overqualifies me for my present job.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
2. My job frequently provides me with new challenges.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
3. My talents are not fully used on my job.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
4. My work experience is more than is necessary to do my present job.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
5. My job provides me with many opportunities to learn new things.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
6. The day-to-day content of my job seldom changes.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
7. Frankly, I am overqualified for the job I hold.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5
8. My job has a lot of potential for change and growth.  
1                      2                      3                      4                      5

### SECTION VI. Job Classification

- A. Have you interviewed for any positions within the DOT during the last three years that you did not get? (Check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ No

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes. Please indicate what percent of 100 each factor listed below you believe contributed to the fact you did not get the position. You may choose more than one factor. (Be sure percents total 100%.)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ % More qualified person was hired
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ % I was one of several qualified applicants
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ % Person chosen was preselected by hiring authority
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ % Affirmative Action guidelines favored other applicants
- e. \_\_\_\_\_ % Age discrimination
- f. \_\_\_\_\_ % Sex discrimination
- g. \_\_\_\_\_ % Race discrimination
- h. \_\_\_\_\_ % Reverse discrimination
- i. \_\_\_\_\_ % Other (please specify; e.g., handicap or disability, unwillingness to relocate)

100    %    Total

B. How much of the time do you feel your abilities, education, and experience are being well-utilized in your present position? (Check one)

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> All of the time  | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Seldom |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Never  |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally     |                                    |

#### SECTION VII. Sexual Harassment

A. Do you know and understand what sexual harassment is?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure ☐

B. Have you ever felt you have been a victim of sexual harassment at the DOT?

Yes ☐ No ☐ (go to E) Not sure ☐

C. Did you report it to management?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

D. Was appropriate action taken by a supervisor to stop the harassment?

Yes ☐ No ☐

E. Have you ever felt you have been a victim of any other forms of harassment (e.g., excessive horseplay, hazing, practical jokes)?

Yes ☐ Please describe \_\_\_\_\_  
No ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

#### SECTION VIII. Personal Statistics

A. What was your age at your last birthday? (Check one)

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Under 30 | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> 50-59      |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> 30 - 39  | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> 60 or over |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> 40 - 49  |  |

B. Race: (Check one)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Native American Indian | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Pacific Islander    |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Black                  | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> White                        |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic               | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) _____ |

C. Do you have a disability? Yes ☐ No ☐

D. Are you part of the random survey or did you request to participate in the survey? (check one)

1. ☐ I am part of the random survey.
2. ☐ I requested to participate in the survey.

Feel free to make additional comments on back. We are especially interested in your opinions related to communication at the DOT and new benefits that you would like to see offered.